

Administrator,

Thank you for your support of ORD's planned restructuring efforts. We look forward to moving ahead on implementation in 2019.

Hot issues

Technical Support to Region 6: Brown's Tree Care landfill fire, Bella Vista, AR

ORD received a request from Region 6 to provide technical support and advice regarding the Brown's Tree Care site near Bella Vista, Arkansas. The site is exhibiting a smoldering fire at a depth within a waste site. ORD experts are conducting a site visit to the landfill this week and will meet with the region and state (Arkansas DEQ) on site. It is believed that waste has been dumped on this site as early as the mid-1970s. The site is 60 feet deep and covers 4.5-5 acres. The fire at the site may be burning more than 50 or 60 feet underground, which makes it difficult to control.

Study of animal carcasses disposal following a foreign animal disease incident

A foreign animal disease (FAD) outbreak could generate millions of dead animals that need to be managed. Grinding animal carcasses into smaller pieces will likely improve the efficiency of the composting operation. However, on-farm grinding capacity using conventional size reduction equipment, like that used in the rendering industry, is limited due to availability of equipment. ORD, in collaboration with OLEM/OEM/CMAD, the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and the NC Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services, initiated a project in late FY18 to evaluate on-farm grinding as an option to pre-treat animal mortalities following a FAD incident. Discussions were recently held with additional stakeholders, including the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VA DEQ) and representatives from the composting industry and the swine industry, to include additional potential grinding technologies into the project. VA DEQ and the industry representatives are interested in the potential use of horizontal grinders (essentially large industrial grade leaf chippers) as a potential for dramatically increasing the operational capacity of grinding operations for large animals, in preparation for a potential African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak--a non-zoonotic (i.e., humans can't catch it). FAD virus that is a hemorrhagic fever similar to Ebola virus that affects pigs. There are currently cases of ASF arising elsewhere in the world and to increase U.S. preparedness, it is a critical aspect of managing the disease to properly dispose the dead animals in a biosecure manner to minimize impact on the \$39 billion pork industry. Initial proof-of-concept testing will be performed by the industry in early 2019 and will evaluate the ability of horizontal grinders to process large pig carcasses without the equipment being irreparably damaged. ORD will directly participate in later testing that will examine biosecurity issues with operations, evaluate the potential for bio-aerosol emissions to occur, and to evaluate methodologies to contain the emissions of bio-aerosols.

Upcoming Major Decisions and events

PFAS

On December 17 ORD will host the ECOS-EPA Bimonthly PFAS call. North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NC DEQ) will present on PFAS ambient air deposition measurements and impacts on groundwater issues in their state. ORD and the Office of Water will present on the update to Method 537, the drinking water analytical methods for PFAS; draft toxicity assessments for GenX chemicals and PFBS; and EPA's PFAS Management Plan. These bimonthly calls will continue into 2019 to share PFAS science and technical information and hear directly from our state partners.

